



Headquarters
U.S. Forces-Afghanistan/
International Security Assistance Force
KABUL AFGHANISTAN
APO AE 09356



HQ ISAF

10 November 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

SUBJECT: COMISAF/USFOR-A Counterinsurgency (COIN) Training Guidance

1. You must understand the mission; understand what we're trying to accomplish - and why. This means you must master COIN in both theory and practical implementation. Only with this understanding can you be an asset to the force and not a liability. The purpose of this training guidance is to convey to each and every one of you, what is most important to focus your limited training time on before you deploy and once you are in country. Commanders must work within my intent and train our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Civilians into a mature force capable of executing complex, multi-service, interagency missions they will soon encounter. Commanders and Sergeants must train their Troops in a way that fosters initiative in their subordinates. Develop the **Strategic Corporal**. Everyone must understand this training guidance, be able to execute it, and become ISAF's Ambassadors throughout the country. Below are the key points of my training guidance:

a. **Master the basics.** Become an expert in your field. Whatever your job, train on it, over and over again, so you can accomplish the routine tasks, routinely. Whether you are an Army medic, a Naval aviator, Marine infantryman, or Air Force EOD technician, train to become the absolute best in your field. Everyone, regardless of your nationality, branch of service or military specialty, must be able to shoot, move, communicate, and medicate.

b. **The People are the Prize.** We all must understand the people of Afghanistan. Operate in a way that respects their culture and religion. Treat them with respect. Ask yourself, "How would I want Soldiers to treat me and my family?" Learn to hold effective Key Leader Engagements (KLEs) with community leaders to help you establish trust. Do not rely on simply attending a course on Afghan culture. I expect commanders to weave cultural scenarios into every training event and teach your subordinates to interact with other cultures. Be creative. Use role players from other organizations. Share and trade ideas.

c. **Driving.** Every interaction with the population, whether positive or negative, influences the Afghans' perceptions of ISAF. Our overly-aggressive driving alienates local citizens and potentially drives them into the arms of the insurgency. Ensure every member of your organization reads and understands the tactical driving directive, dtd 26 August 2009.

d. **Escalation of Force.** Understand my tactical directive regarding EOF procedures ISAF SOP 373, dtd 18 October 2008, applies. All deploying personnel require training in the Afghanistan specific EOF procedures mandated by CDRUSFOR-A/COMISAF. EOF training should be conducted as individual and collective events and should be incorporated into all pre-mobilization training to ensure that the procedures become second nature.

e. **Fire Support.** The ability *accurately* to call in both ground and air fire support is a critical task, as well as understanding when it is, *or isn't*, appropriate to use. Study and train the Tactical Callout, to give you additional options. Know my Tactical Directive regarding Close Air Support (CAS). BDE Commanders must ensure their units have enough Joint Fire Observers (JFO) to support dispersed operations. As we grow our partnering capacity with the Afghan National Army and Police, these numbers will significantly increase. Both in pre-deployment training and in theater, I encourage Joint Tactical Air Controllers (JTACs) to teach, coach, and mentor both JFOs and leadership, to ensure this critical skill is cross-leveled at the lowest level.

f. **Language Training.** Everyone should learn basic language skills. Every deployed person should be able to greet locals and say "thank you". Each platoon, or like sized organization, that will have regular contact with the population should have at least one leader that speaks Dari at least the 0+ level, with a goal of a level 1 in oral communication. These personnel will not replace interpreters, but will enhance the capabilities of the unit. This language skill is as important as your other basic combat skills.

g. **Detainee Operations.** From the point of capture, to the hand over to the appropriate Afghan authorities, I expect that our Troops are thoroughly trained in how to conduct detention operations, to include: the handling, tactical questioning, and procedures for processing of detainees. Troops must know the guidelines and limitations applicable when operating under ISAF and the different guidelines and limitations applicable to OEF detention operations.

h. **Counter-IED (C-IED) training.** Insurgents continue to employ Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) to attack our Troops and these strikes are responsible for approximately 60% of all our casualties in Afghanistan. C-IED Training must be a continual point of focus for deploying forces and must be flexible enough to rapidly incorporate changes to both friendly and enemy tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs). Commanders must leverage the vast amount of counter-IED expertise from the Joint Improvised Defeat Organization (JIEDDO), the Improvised Explosive Defeat Capabilities Integration Team (CIT), and other organizations.

i. **You must understand your Operational Environment.** Traditional Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) is insufficient and it is intimate knowledge of the *Human Terrain* that is paramount. Know the society's leadership systems; learn the National, Provincial, and district government structure. Understand the familial, clan and tribal cultures. What are the relationships and tensions among the separate groups? All of us must learn the ASCOPE (Area, Structures, Capabilities, Organizations, People and Events) methodology to refine our awareness of the operational environment. This gives us an understanding of civil considerations from the point of view of the population, insurgent, and counterinsurgent. Incorporate early into your training program so concepts can be weaved into all of your exercises, as you prepare to deploy.

j. **ANSF Partnership.** *"Arguably, the most important military component of the struggle against violent extremists is not the fighting we do ourselves, but how well we help prepare our partners to defend and govern themselves."* Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, 10 October 2007. Train your Soldiers to be advisors, coaches, mentors, and

responsible partners. Learn how to build relationships. I expect Commanders to arrive into the theater with a thorough understanding of the structure of Afghan Security Forces (ANA/ANP/ANBP). Become an expert on how they are recruited, resourced, and retained. Master rapport building. Look at your Afghan Security Force partners as team members in your platoon, company, battalion, or brigade. Learn to ***influence***, rather than direct, Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). I want you to understand how to take your partnership from supported by ANSF to supporting ANSF.

k. **Know the Civilian component to our Civil/Military Team.** Understand how they are organized, their missions, and whom they support. Know the difference between USAID, Department of State, U.S. Department of Agriculture and our partner nations' civil capabilities. More importantly, find out how you can work together to accomplish your missions. ***Help me create unity of effort.*** Leverage their considerable experience. Understand the tools that they use, like the Tactical Conflict Assessment and Planning Framework (TCAPF) that can assist all of us, both military and civilian, with providing a common view of the sources of instability.

l. **Learn the Integrated Civil/Military Decision Making Structure.** The U.S. Department of State, United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and USFOR-A/ISAF have developed a cooperative leadership framework, the Integrated Command Team (ICT), that will be working together from the district level up to each Regional Command. The ICT consists of, at a minimum, the company/battalion commander, senior U.S. civilian lead, and PMT or equivalent lead. The purpose of this single command team is to ensure CIV/MIL operational planning is integrated into a comprehensive strategy agreed upon by all agencies involved in conducting operations.

m. **Information Management Centers (Fusion Cells).** This rapidly emerging capability, collocated with each Regional Command, is being built to assist commanders with creating unity of effort among the various civilian/military/coalition organizations within each AOR. Learn the capabilities and limitations of each of the organizations participating in your regional fusion cells. Understand how to leverage these centers of information/intelligence sharing to best develop unity of effort and unity of purpose in your AOR. I encourage our National Training Centers to replicate these powerful enablers so commanders and staffs become accustomed to interagency and inter-service coordination and operations.

n. **Know the enablers.** Understand the capabilities and limitations all of the organic, and non-organic, enablers that you can leverage to assist you with your mission. Learn the Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) platforms. Anticipate decentralized operations and train multiple operators on the various systems. Build more capacity than you think you'll need. Know what HUMINT/SIGINT resources you can leverage. What benefits can they provide you during your missions? Practice pushing capabilities down to the lowest levels.

o. **Train decentralized operations to the lowest level.** It is especially important that senior leadership develop a trust in and empower subordinate leaders to make appropriate, timely decisions. While senior leaders must maintain acute situational

awareness, decentralized control usually provides greater success and credibility with our Afghan security force partners in the dynamic environment we encounter daily.

p. **Money as a Weapon System - Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP) and ISAF Post-Operations Emergency Relief Fund (POERF).** You must become experts at leveraging the various funds available to you to assist the local population. Know which funds to use to solve your particular problem and how to make it happen quickly. CERP funds are important enablers that provide commanders with the ability to initiate small, quick-impact projects and may also be used for condolence payments. POERF provides commanders with the means to respond quickly to urgent requirements for humanitarian assistance immediately following ISAF military operations. Solatia payments, or compensation for loss, are most often made using Operations and Maintenance-Army (OMA) funds. In order to rapidly execute CERP projects, I expect Commanders and staff, from the company through the BCT level, to understand the CERP nomination and boarding processes. Additionally, Commanders must ensure that they have the appropriate number of Project Managers (PM), Paying Agents (PA), and Contracting Officers to be able to execute effective development operations.

q. **Develop Learning Organizations.** *"This is a game of wits and will. You've got to be learning and adapting constantly to survive."* General Peter J. Schoomaker, USA, 2004. We need our deploying forces to be prepared to conduct counterinsurgency operations upon arrival; however, once you are in country, continue to grow your base of knowledge every day. Learn, share, and disseminate information and intelligence quickly. **Flatten the organization.** Break down the barriers that impede your progress towards a common goal. Be inquisitive. Question your assumptions. Do not think that you have it "right". If a tactic works this week, it may not work the next.

2. Although challenging, the task our Nations have asked us to accomplish is by no means impossible. If you are not already deployed, you will be soon be entering a complex environment for which the most effective asset we have is a thinking, well-trained Soldier, Sailor, Airman, or Marine. On the same day, you may find yourself meeting with Afghan tribal elders to hear their concerns about the lack of water; conducting a combined patrol with an Afghan National Army platoon; and finally assisting a Provincial Reconstruction Team with the delivery of supplies to build a local school. Anticipate, adapt, and embrace change. I have the utmost confidence that you, and your leaders, will be prepared to prevail in this joint endeavour.

Encl
ISAF Cdr's Counterinsurgency
Guidance



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ISAF Commander's Counterinsurgency Guidance¹

Protecting the people is the mission.

The conflict will be won by persuading the population, not by destroying the enemy.

ISAF will succeed when GIRA earns the support of the people.

ISAF's mission is to help the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRA) defeat the insurgency threatening their country. Protecting the Afghan people is the mission. The Afghan people will decide who wins this fight, and we (GIRA and ISAF) are in a struggle for their support. The effort to gain and maintain that support must inform every action we take. Essentially, we and the insurgents are presenting an argument for the future to the people of Afghanistan: they will decide which argument is the most attractive, most convincing, and has the greatest chance of success.

The Afghan people are a diverse mix of ethnicities and tribes with strong traditions and a fierce sense of independence. Their country has been scarred by 30 years of war, and the fabric of Afghan society has been badly damaged. Traditional tribal structures have been undermined deliberately by the insurgents; many communities have fractured. State weakness and corruption erode confidence in government. Nearly eight years of international presence has not brought the anticipated benefits. The Afghan people are skeptical and unwilling to commit active support to either side until convinced of a winning proposition.

We need to understand the people and see things through their eyes. It is their fears, frustrations, and expectations that we must address. We will not win simply by killing insurgents. We will help the Afghan people win by securing them, by protecting them from intimidation, violence, and abuse, and by operating in a way that respects their culture and religion. This means that we must change the way that we think, act, and operate. *We must get the people involved as active participants in the success of their communities.*

Every action we take must reflect this change: how we interact with people, how we drive or fly, how we patrol, how we use force, how we fund work programs and projects. This is their country, and we are

An ISAF patrol was traveling through a city at a high rate of speed, driving down the center to force traffic off the road. Several pedestrians and other vehicles were pushed out of the way. A vehicle approached from the side into the traffic circle. The gunner fired a pen flare at it, which entered the vehicle and caught the interior on fire. As the ISAF patrol sped away, Afghans crowded around the car. How many insurgents did the patrol make that day?

¹ This guidance applies to both counterinsurgency and stability operations in Afghanistan

their guests. We must think carefully about everything we do and understand the impact of our actions on the people we are here to partner with and protect. Security may not come from overwhelming firepower, and force protection may mean more personal interaction with the Afghan people, not less.

How insurgents operate. Our task is complicated and threatened by a resilient, highly adaptive, and multifaceted insurgency. An insurgency is unlike a conventional military threat. The insurgent's attack is a secondary effort to discredit the government and provoke a counterinsurgent response that alienates the people. Corruption and abuse of power by government officials feeds into the insurgent narrative. Behind the smoke of battle, the insurgents are principally focused on political and social activities, to include information operations, designed to gain control over the population. In so doing, they displace the government's legitimacy.

We must understand how the insurgents compete in order to combat their strategy. They adapt to local conditions. They influence the population through both intimidation and attraction. In their propaganda they claim to protect Afghan culture and religion. They incite social strife and undermine traditional structures. In places, they control the roads, collect revenues, and mete out swift justice. They co-opt disenfranchised groups and pay young men to fight. They exploit ISAF mistakes and inappropriate actions to reinforce their argument.

An ISAF unit in a relatively permissive area had a difficult time maneuvering large vehicles along a road because it was lined with fruit trees. To improve mobility, the unit had the trees cut down. Many people in the village had their livelihoods destroyed. IEDs began appearing along the road shortly thereafter.

Playing into their hands. A military force, culturally programmed to respond conventionally (and predictably) to insurgent attacks, is akin to the bull that repeatedly charges a matador's cape – only to tire and eventually be defeated by a much weaker opponent. This is predictable – the bull does what comes naturally. While a conventional approach is instinctive, that behavior is self-defeating.

First, an insurgency cannot be defeated by attrition; its supply of fighters, and even leadership, is effectively endless. Roughly seventy percent of the Afghan population is under age 25. Vast unemployment, illiteracy, and widespread political and social disaffection create fertile ground for insurgent influence and recruiting.

The intricate familial, clan, and tribal connections of Afghan society turns "attrition math" on its head. From a conventional standpoint, the killing of two insurgents in a group of ten leaves eight remaining: $10 - 2 = 8$. From the insurgent standpoint, those two killed were likely related to many others who will want vengeance. If civilian casualties occurred, that number will be much higher. Therefore, the death of two creates more willing recruits: $10 \text{ minus } 2 \text{ equals } 20$ (or more) rather than 8. This is part of the reason why eight years of individually successful kinetic actions have resulted in more violence. The math works against an attrition mind-set. This is not to say that we should avoid a fight, but to win we need to do much more than simply kill or capture militants.

Second, conventional military action against insurgents consumes considerable resources with little real return and is likely to alienate the people we are trying to secure. Large scale operations to kill or capture militants carry a significant risk of causing civilian casualties and collateral damage. If civilians die in a firefight, it does not matter who shot them – we still failed to protect them from harm. Destroying a home or property jeopardizes the livelihood of an entire family – and creates more insurgents. We sow the seeds of our own demise.

Although disruption operations may be necessary at times, we must recognize their effects are temporary at best when the population is under insurgent influence or control. Sporadically moving into an area for a few hours or even a few days solely to search for the enemy and then leave does little good, and may do much harm. The local insurgents hide in plain sight and the people remain ambivalent. Once we depart, the militants re-emerge and life under insurgent control resumes. These operations are not only ineffectual, they can be counter-productive. In conducting them, we are not building relationships with people, and we are not helping Afghans solve Afghan problems.

In short, we don't have to be stupid or ineffective to fail – just misguided in our approach.

Changing our mindset. We need to think and act very differently to be successful. The will of the people is the Objective. An effective "offensive" operation in counterinsurgency, therefore, is one that takes from the insurgent what he cannot afford to lose – control of the population. We must think of offensive operations not simply as those that target militants, but ones that earn the trust and support of the people while denying influence and access to the insurgent. Holding routine *jirgas* with community leaders that build trust and solve problems is an offensive operation. So is using projects and work programs to bring communities together and meet their needs. Missions primarily designed to "disrupt" militants are not.

An ISAF unit was often taking rocket fire from nearby a certain village. Rather than raiding the village, the commander decided instead to find out more about them and the reasons for hostility. The ANA commander suggested an ANA patrol to learn more about the village. The patrol discovered the village was upset about a night raid that occurred over two years ago. He also learned education was important to the village but they had no school or supplies. The commanders sent another patrol to the village a few days with a truckload of school supplies. The next day, the village elders came to the base to meet with the ANA and ISAF commanders. They delivered over 100 thank-you notes from the children. Soon, several local projects were coordinated with the elders for the village – projects they owned. The rocket attacks stopped.

Think of counterinsurgency as an argument to earn the support of the people. It is a contest to influence the real and very practical calculations on the part of the people about which side to support. Every action, reaction, failure to act, and all that is said and done become part of the debate. The people in the audience watch, listen, and make rational choices based on who can better protect them, provide for their needs, respect their dignity and their community, and offer opportunities for the

future. Ideology can influence the outcome, but is usually subordinate to the more practical considerations of survival and everyday life.

Earn the support of the people and the war is won, regardless of how many militants are killed or captured.

We must undermine the insurgent argument while offering a more compelling alternative. Our argument must communicate – through word and deed – that we and GIRoA have the capability and commitment to protect and support the people. Together, we need to provide a convincing and sustainable sense of justice and well-being to a weary and skeptical populace. We must turn perceptions from fear and uncertainty to trust and confidence.

To be effective, therefore, we have to help change the local context so people are more attracted to building and protecting their communities than destroying them. Leverage economic initiatives and routine *jirgas* with community leaders to employ young men and develop peaceful means to resolve outstanding issues; create viable local alternatives to insurgency.

At the same time, it would be naïve to ignore the fact that the enemy often gets a vote on how we focus our time and energy. This is certainly the case in times of high kinetic activity as well as in the areas where the “shadow government” influences the population. There is clearly a role for precise operations that keep the insurgents off balance, take the fight to their sanctuaries, and prevent them from affecting the population. These operations are important, but, in and of themselves, are not necessarily decisive.

They can be effective when the insurgents have become so isolated from the population that they are no longer welcome, have been kicked out of their communities, and are reduced to hiding in remote areas and raiding from there. Setting these conditions throughout the year will enable kinetic operations to have an enduring rather than fleeting impact.

Keeping the right balance over time is critical and there is no mathematical formula for it. *Mobilizing the community* to participate actively for their own safety, stability, and success is the crux of counterinsurgency at local levels – and creates circumstances to end insurgent influence permanently.

One ISAF unit and their partnered Afghan company were participating in a large shura in a previously hostile village. Over 500 people, to include former fighters, were in attendance. Nearly the entire village turned out. The unit had been working for months to build relationships with the elders and people. As the relationships strengthened and local projects began improving quality of life and employment opportunities, the village elders requested the meeting. During the meeting, two insurgents began firing shots at one of the unit's observation posts. Knowing the stakes of the meeting, the young sergeant in charge of the OP told his men to hold their fire. He knew this was a provocative act designed to get him to over-react and ruin the meeting. He reported the incident. The shura continued. Later, the village elders found the two militants and punished them accordingly.

We must know the people, their environment and aspirations, and work together with them to meet their needs. Strive to focus 95% of our energy on the 95% of the population that deserves and needs our support. Doing so will isolate the insurgents. Take action against the 5% – the insurgents – as necessary or when the right opportunities present themselves. Do not let them distract you from your primary tasks:

Embrace the People. Build connections and be conscious of the need to pass them off to your successor. Afghan culture is founded on personal relationships. Earning the trust of the people is a large part of our mission. Build relationships with tribal, community, and religious leaders. Success requires communication, collaboration, and cooperation. Seek out the underprivileged, the disenfranchised, and the disaffected and bring them on the team. Understand the local grievances and problems that drive instability, and take action to redress them. Work with the children and students. Insist the ANSF and GIRA officials support these efforts, and teach them to lead these efforts.

Use your relationships with the people, the ANSF, and the GIRA officials to become an expert on the local situation. Get to know the neighborhood. Learn who is the most successful farmer and why, who feels excluded and why, and which families are the most powerful and who they are united to by marriage. Be a positive force in the community, shield the people from harm, and foster safety and security so people can work and raise their families in peace.

Carefully assess risk and project confidence – excessive force protection is distancing, not inspiring. Think of how you would expect a foreign army to operate in your neighborhood, among your families and your children, and act accordingly. The way you drive, your dress and gestures, with whom you eat lunch, the courage with which you fight, the way you respond to an Afghan's grief or joy – this is all part of the argument.

Win the argument. Use localized development and economic support to bring community leaders and people together for their own success. Listen, share, and get buy-in. Build local ownership and capacity. Together with legitimate GIRA leaders, work all local issues with the local shura and community. Foster ownership. As the Afghans say, "If you sweat for it, you will protect it."

Partner with ANSF at all echelons. Our job is to hold them accountable for performance in serving the Afghan people and protecting them from harm. Build their capacity to secure their own country. Foster ownership – their success is our success. Live and train together, plan and operate together. Share the same battle-rhythm and information. Integrate your command and control structures. Put them in the

A Police Mentor Team believed the District ANP Chief to be corrupt. After multiple attempts to facilitate a change in behavior, the PMT built a case to take to the Provincial leadership. The Provincial leadership conducted an operation that confirmed the evidence. They replaced the corrupt Police Chief with an honest, hard-working leader, and referred the removed Chief to the Afghan justice system. Although the process required many weeks, the PMT helped to empower Afghan leaders to take appropriate action to protect the population from this malign actor.

lead and support them, even before they think they are ready. Coach them to excellence, and they will amaze you with how quickly they take charge.

Build Governance Capacity and Accountability. Developing good governance is everyone's responsibility. Build capacity and accountability at all levels, down to local communities. Promote Afghan leadership that serves the people. Empower those who display competence, care, and commitment for their people. But be discerning and make distinctions. Confront self-serving officials who monopolize wealth and power and abuse the people's trust. Working alongside our Afghan counterparts, we must find incentives and mechanisms to change behavior, and demand Afghan leaders take appropriate action to hold corrupt officials accountable. Looking the other way or enabling government officials who fail to meet their obligations makes you part of the problem. Protecting the people not only requires protecting them from physical harm, but also from corruption and abuse of power.

Get better every day. Take action to improve stability in your area. Learn how to adapt, how to shape the environment, and how to be more effective with the community leaders and the people. Listen to our Afghan colleagues; talk with the Afghans you meet; ask questions about how we can improve and help them achieve their goals. Listen to their stories and what they want to tell you. You are authorized – indeed, it is your responsibility – to adjust your actions within the intent of this guidance to adapt to local conditions.

Over-communicate. Quickly share critical information and ideas. Challenge the conventional wisdom if it no longer fits the environment. This is a battle of wits -- be vigilant as the environment shifts and the enemy adapts. If you are comfortable, the enemy is probably ahead of you. To win, we must understand their strategy and learn from their successes and their failures – and from our own as well. Adapt faster than they are able to adjust.

We (GIRoA and ISAF) will succeed by transforming the environment through local security, connecting responsive and credible governance to the community leaders and the people, and facilitating compelling alternatives to the insurgency. The people will decide the contest in GIRoA's favor.


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ISAF Counterinsurgency Guidance: Key Points

The Afghan people are the Objective. Protecting them is the mission. Focus 95% of your time building relationships with them and, together with the Afghan government, meeting their needs.

Get rid of the conventional mind-set. Focus on the people, not the militants. By earning their trust and helping an accountable GIRoA gain the support of the people, you take from the enemy what he cannot afford to lose – the control of the population.

Embrace the people

- Think before you act. Understand the consequences of your actions – how you drive, how you patrol, how you relate to people, how you help the community. View your actions through the eyes of the Afghans. If we harm Afghan civilians, we sow the seeds of our own defeat.
- Be an expert on the local situation. Build connections and hold routine *jirgas*. Afghan culture is founded on personal relationships. Listen to the population and adjust accordingly. Earn their trust. Develop their ownership in the solution. If they sweat for it, they will protect it.
- Be a positive force in the community; shield the people from harm; foster stability. Use local economic initiatives to increase employment and give young men alternatives to insurgency. Demand that CERP, CIMIC and other capabilities support these efforts. Help Afghans solve Afghan problems.

Partner with ANSF

- Live, eat, and train together, plan and operate together, depend on one another, and hold each other accountable – at all echelons down to soldier level. Treat them as equal partners in success.
- Their success is our goal. Respect them; put them in the lead and coach them to excellence.

Build Governance Capacity and Accountability

- Facilitate and enable transparent and accountable governance from national to community level. Insist government officials serve the people; support those who do.
- Confront corrupt officials. Protecting the people requires protection from physical harm, corruption and abuse of power. With your Afghan counterparts work to change corrupt behavior that adversely affects the people and the mission. If the behavior does not change, demand the Afghan higher leadership take appropriate action.

Get Better Everyday

- Learn and adapt to the environment. Keep your skills sharp. Improve daily.
- Learn how to shape the environment, and how to achieve greater effects with the people more quickly. Listen to and learn from our Afghan colleagues.
- Communicate and share ideas. Challenge the conventional wisdom if it no longer fits the environment. This is a battle of wits – learn and adapt more quickly than the insurgent.